Claims:

1. A method of storing and accessing a copy of digital content located on a physical medium in possession of a user on a server for subsequent access thereon by the user, said method comprising the steps of:

a. establishing a communication link with the server;

b. providing to the server over the communication link a request to store a copy of the digital content on the server;

c. providing to the server over the communication link a user ID;

d. uploading the digital content from the physical medium to the server over the communication link;

e. subsequent to the step of uploading the digital content, providing a request to the server to receive the digital content from the server;

f. subsequent to or simultaneous with the step of providing the request to receive the digital content, providing to the server the user ID; and

g. receiving the digital content from the server only after performing step (f).

2. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of compressing the digital content prior to performing the step of uploading the digital content.

3. The method of claim 1 wherein the digital content is received by a rendering device.

4. The method of claim 3 wherein said rendering device is a portable digital content player.

5. The method of claim 3 wherein said rendering device is an audio player.

6. The method of claim 3 wherein said rendering device is an audio/visual player.

7. The method of claim 3 wherein said rendering device is a printing apparatus.

8. The method of claim 1 wherein the communication link is established over a computer network.

9. The method of claim 8 wherein the computer network is the Internet.

10. The method of claim 3 wherein the digital content is received by the rendering device over a wireless transmission link.

11. The method of claim 1 wherein the digital content includes audio content.

12. The method of claim 1 wherein the digital content includes video content.

13. The method of claim 1 wherein the user ID provided in step (c) is provided from an IC chip.

14. The method of claim 1 wherein the user ID provided in step (f) is provided from an IC chip.

15. The method of claim 13 wherein said IC chip is a non-contact IC card.

16. The method of claim 14 wherein said IC chip is a non-contact IC card.

17. The method of claim 1 wherein the user ID comprises biometric data.

18. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of receiving digital content comprises the step of receiving only a segment of the digital content and further comprising the step of providing to the server the user ID in order to receive a subsequent segment of the digital content.

19. The method of claim 14 wherein the step of receiving digital content comprises the step of receiving only a segment of the digital content and further comprising the step of providing to the server the user ID in order to receive a subsequent segment of the digital content.

20. An apparatus for rendering digital content, comprising:

a communication interface for communicating with a remotely located server;

a digital signal processor for receiving digital content from the server over the communication interface;

a data storage device for storing the received digital content;

a decoder for decoding the received digital content;

a digital to analog converter for converting the decoded digital content to an analog signal in which content is embodied;

a renditioning unit for rendering the content embodied in the analog signal; and

an input device for receiving a user ID, said input device being operationally coupled to the communication interface for communicating said user ID to the server.

21. The apparatus of claim 20 wherein said digital content is audio information and said renditioning unit is a speaker transducer.

22. The apparatus of claim 20 wherein said digital content includes visual information and said renditioning unit includes a display.

23. The apparatus of claim 20 wherein said digital content includes text or graphical based information and said renditioning unit includes a printer.

24. The apparatus of claim 20 wherein said input device is an IC chip reader/writer.

25. The apparatus of claim 24 wherein said IC chip reader/writer is a non-contact IC chip reader/writer.

26. The apparatus of claim 20 wherein said communication interface is an RF transceiver.

27. The apparatus of claim 20 wherein said RF transceiver employs a wireless protocol selected from the group consisting of Bluetooth, IEEE 802.11, IEEE 802.15, IEEE802.16, Near Field Communication --- Interface and Protocol ("NFCIP-1"), and HomeRF.

28. The apparatus of claim 20 wherein said communication interface is a cable modem.

29. A method of storing and downloading a compressed copy of digital content to a subscriber in possession of a physical medium on which an uncompressed copy of the digital content is located, said method comprising the steps of:

a. receiving a request to store a copy of digital content from the subscriber over a communication link;

b. receiving over the communication link a subscriber ID;

c. receiving over the communication link a compressed copy of the digital content from the physical medium in the possession of the subscriber;

d. subsequent to the step of receiving the compressed copy of the digital content, receiving a request to download the digital content to the subscriber;

e. subsequent to or simultaneous with the step of receiving the request to receive the digital content, receiving the subscriber ID; and

f. providing the compressed copy of the digital content to the subscriber over the communication link.

30. A method of acquiring digital content from a content provider, said method comprising the steps of:

a. establishing a communication link with the content provider;

b. providing to the content provider over the communication link a request to acquire digital content from the content provider by transferring the digital content from the content provider to a remotely located server;

c. providing to the content provider over the communication link a user ID;

d. subsequent to the step of uploading the digital content, providing a request over a communication link to the server to receive the digital content from the server;

e. subsequent to or simultaneous with the step of providing the request to receive the digital content, providing to the server the user ID; and

f. receiving the digital content from the server only after performing step (e).